

# THE INDIVIDUAL

Newsletter of the Society for Individual Freedom

Grant House 56-60 St John Street London EC1M 4DT Telephone 071-600 3222 Fax 071-490 2296

**President:** The Lord Monson  
**Chairman:** Professor Peter Campbell

**January 1993**  
**Editor:** Jason Hollands  
(from February 1993)

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

### **What is 'Business Ethics'? Thoughts of a Free-Marketer**

will be the topic of the talk to be given on Wednesday 27 January at 6.30pm by **Professor Norman Barry**, Professor of Politics at the University of Buckingham: upstairs room at the Red Lion, 48 Parliament Street, London, SW1.

**Corporatism in Britain and Europe** will be the topic of the talk to be given on Wednesday 24 February at 7.30pm (please note the later time) by **Mr Rodney Atkinson**, author of many works on freedom and public policy: upstairs room at the Red Lion, 48 Parliament Street, London SW1.

**Freedom and Public Policy: Some Problems** will be the topic of the talk to be given on Wednesday 31 March at 7.30pm by **Professor Peter Campbell**: upstairs room at the Red Lion, 48 Parliament Street, London SW1.

Subsequent meetings will be announced in the April issue of *The Individual*. They will include a luncheon in the House of Lords and some supper meetings.

## SIR RICHARD BODY MP

At the AGM on 25 November 1992 Sir Richard Body MP retired from the Chairmanship of the Society, which he had held in succession to the late Sir Ian Mactaggart. His enthusiasm for the cause of freedom, his vigour in its promotion, his keen interest in the Society as an organisation that should be defending freedom in Britain whenever it is restricted or threatened, his generosity in agreeing to serve several years longer than he had initially envisaged and his geniality on all occasions will long be gratefully remembered by the Society.

Sir Richard very kindly agreed to become a Vice-President and was elected to that post at the AGM

# CAN WE ANY LONGER SPEAK OF THE FREE WORLD?

Professor Kenneth Minogue

London School of Economics and Political Science

Freedom triumphed, we might well think, when the Cold War ended but it would be foolish to regard communism merely as a mistake we have corrected. So powerful a movement clearly corresponds to something fundamental in our world: the propensity to make things fit our current desires by managing them. Communism was the propensity to replace the chaotic relations of civil society - unequal, ridden with vice, crime, vulgarity, etc - by rational management; and this meant, above all, managing human beings both in how they act and in how they think. It was an attractive project because it promised (and to some extent did give) security and a certain stability.

More specifically, what Marxism did was to anticipate the abundance and freedom promised by a modern society and to mobilise people by promising to give it to them now. It was a caricature of certain anticipated features of 'capitalism' but it failed to achieve the benign features which modern society has in store but which can arrive only after several generations of peaceful evolution. Its malign features are no less a caricature of certain characteristics of modern life: its managerialism is a crude and brutal version of a managerialism implicit in the way we live. What Communism did was to pass responsibility for the satisfaction of needs and wants away from individuals themselves, and to rest that responsibility in the managers of society. The liberation it offered was a caricature of liberty, because the subject of liberation is always an abstract class (workers, women, gays, etc). Real human beings are thereby locked into a fixed identity whose terms are given by the collective movement.

But to be managed in terms of such narrow identities is to have lost one's liberty. For liberty problem of how those rights will be implied to be found in the distinction between being ruled and being managed, not between managing and being managed. This is no less true when social management is done in terms of such civil categories as rights. The multiplication of rights attached to abstract classes of people such as racial, sexual and other groups poses the long-term problem of how those rights will be implemented. Even at a low level of provision, problems of distribution will arise. In communism, the solution to problems such as distribution was the massive use of state terror. That is not an option in a modern liberal democracy. The second option is the use of authority, but in a modern society the limits of authority are the limits of a constitutional

government. There is a third option, which is described euphemistically as 'education', as in 'we must educate people into caring for the environment'. Such a use of 'education' is a category mistake because true education does not issue in a single agreed conclusion. The third option is really the manipulation of attitude and opinion and is an essential instrument of management.

To manage someone is to treat that person purely behaviourally, in terms of carrots and sticks, in order to induce the right beliefs and attitudes and thereby the right behaviour. A person managed in this way ceases to be a true person for he will lose moral identity. Society is turned into a transmitter, sending message by a variety of 'codes' to the people living in it. No aspect of social life is immune from being treated and judged in this communicative fashion. The managers seek to determine what the messages shall be. For example, young women must be given 'role models' to persuade them that they could and should go into the work-force, and that they would prosper in it.

From the point of view of freedom, all communication has come to be corrupted by this managerial conception of human life. For example, a character in a soap opera using a branded commodity is excellent advertising. So too is a character whose situation or opinions reflect the crusades of interest groups. The result has been (for example) opponents of smoking actually demanding that a character in a soap opera die a lingering and painful death from a smoking-related disease. Again, government agencies abandon the role of government in order to act as pressure groups: what else are we doing with a Department of Health, a Chief Medical Officer and Health Education Council telling us how to live longer? Governments are there to rule us, not to tell us what to eat. This is a good example of how managerialism grows and how it may take time to reveal its consequences. Those who back in 1949 welcomed the introduction of health services 'free at the point of delivery' for example, were a long way from the discovery that this benefit had implications for the number of fags they smoked: they know now. Passionate single-interest groups wage endless campaigns to gain a moral ascendancy over a population assumed to be purely reflective of its social surroundings. All modes of communication, including art, become propaganda. That is where social managerialism leads us.

'Political correctness' is the latest form of managerialism. It is starting to exert a malign influence on our language and behaviour. Its underlying theme is equalising the esteem and respect we have for everybody, irrespective of race, sex, physical condition, intelligence, etc. This is the very model of a managerial project because the human propensity for admiration and denigration is so unpredictable as to require ceaseless management if it is to be equalised. Yet communists and socialists, who concerned themselves with a single class of the oppressed, found that the workers on whom their project depended rejected their ascribed collective identity and took every opportunity of advancement to slip away from their role as the docile oppressed. They came to behave with the individualistic insouciance of the bourgeoisie, and even to vote conservatively. The disillusioned managerialist seeks above all to

find objects of management which can never slide off into independence in the way that specific categories of humans can: animals and the environment are ideal objects of managerial attention because they can never talk back.

Liberty is currently being threatened by the destruction of stable moral identities, such as those found in religious allegiance. The best object of social management is someone who pursues his or her desires in ways which the manager of society can interpret and channel. A new sort of human being - what Reisman called 'other directed' - is needed for the neo-totalitarian project of complete social harmony. It is clearly not a project which would appeal to those who value liberty.

24 June 1992

## THE FREE MARKET CASE FOR FEDERALISM;

Dr Nigel Ashford, Department of Politics,  
Staffordshire University.

The British debate about European integration has become symbolised by 'Thatcher versus Delors'. Thatcher represents those who view the EC as a threat to national sovereignty and to inter-governmentalism and who see federalism as an attempt to achieve socialism through the back door - Delors represents those who want an EC with clear powers and responsibilities, federalism, and socialist interventionism. In this picture, intergovernmentalism and the free market and federalism and socialism are viewed as natural couples.

This debate links two issues - the nature of the economic ideology of the EC with the issue of where power should lie - in ways contradictory to earlier debates. Traditionally, it is socialists who have been hostile to the EC because they recognise that it imposes severe restraints on the possibility of socialism. In contrast free marketeers have supported the EC as an instrument for the liberalisation of markets. My theme is that the EC is fundamentally, although not exclusively, a free market or liberal Europe, and that liberals should have no objection in principle to federalism.

Two giants of economic liberalism, Nobel Prize winners, Friedrich Hayek and James Buchanan, have endorsed the principle of a federal Europe. Hayek claimed in *The Road to Serfdom* that peace through federation was the 'ideal of almost all the liberal thinkers of the nineteenth century'. He felt that 'we cannot hope for order or lasting peace ... if states ... regain unfettered sovereignty in the economic sphere'. He identified the need for a

power that would be able to restrain national governments, by establishing a set of rules about what they can do, with the powers to enforce those rules. That hope is at last coming to fruition with '1992'.

Buchanan, drawing upon the public choice school of which he is a chief proponent, supports federalism, 'of diversity among separate co-operative communities, of shared sovereignty, of effective devolution of political authority and perhaps most importantly, of the limits of such authority; this idea, enforced within credible constitutional guarantees, can be the European source of a fabulous century'.

The Treaty of Rome which established the EC in 1957 was a free market document, as socialist critics have long complained. The principal goal was the establishment of a common market, based on the 'four freedoms': the free movement of goods, services, capital and people. The EC abolished all tariffs and quotas between EC member countries and established a Common External Tariff towards goods and services from the rest of the world so that they could move freely within the EC. While there should be no tariffs or quotas on non-EC imports either, it is important to note that the common tariff was lower than the national tariffs they replaced, an average of 4.7% compared to a national average of 7%. The result was a tremendous expansion of intra-EC trade and a substantial improvement in the living standards of the people of the EC.

The obvious question is why has a true internal market not yet been created, although by the end of 1992 we will have achieved great progress towards it. The first explanation is that national governments have resorted to a number of non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to exclude EC competition and replace the loss of tariffs and quotas. Second, the EC made a serious mistake in seeking to remove these NTBs by the process of harmonisation, of seeking the same laws, regulations and even prices throughout the EC. This was not only a long, difficult and frequently fruitless quest, but it also brought the EC into ridicule with some highly foolish proposals (most of which were never adopted for example, the famous attempt to define a Euro-sausage).

The creation of a single market requires the removal of three types of NTBs. First there are physical barriers - frontier controls. They include documentation, statistical collection, VAT collection, and transport regulations. Their impact has been diminished by the reduction of border restrictions and the introduction of a Single Administrative Document. The idea of '1992' is to abolish frontiers completely, which is opposed by some as increasing the risks of terrorism, drugs, rabies and immigration. However, borders in themselves are ineffective anyway and other means need to be found to deal with these potential problems.

The second type of NTB is fiscal, the use of the tax system to discriminate against foreign products. For example, the Commission forced the UK to reduce its tax on wine to that of beer, because Brussels felt that the different tax levels reflected protection for the UK beer industry against continental wine imports. This does not require the Commission to determine national tax levels.

The third and most important series of barriers are technical. Under the Treaty of Rome, exemptions from the free movement of goods and services could be made on grounds of 'public morality, health and safety and national security'. Governments have been very creative in using this clause to create new barriers. Amongst numerous examples of these technical barriers now removed were French rules on brake components in cars which increased the cost of car imports and the Belgian insistence that margarine should be sold only in cubes. Governments also used technical qualifications to favour their public purchasing from national companies, when buying from other EC countries would lead to considerable savings for taxpayers.

The lack of an internal market was challenged by the former British European Commissioner in Brussels, Lord Cockfield, in 1985 when he

presented his White Paper on *Completing the Internal Market*, which made 300 specific proposals on how to achieve a single market by 31 December 1992. The Cecchini report in 1988 tried to calculate 'the costs of non-Europe', the failure to have a common market. The report suggested that the achievement of a single market would reduce costs by £140 billion, provide 1.5 million new jobs, increase the EC's GDP by 5%, reduce prices by 6%, and reduce public expenditure by 2.2% of GDP. These figures are very controversial, with some commentators stating that the report greatly exaggerated the benefits, while others suggested it was too cautious, ignoring the dynamic effects. Even if the figures were optimistic, the benefits would still be substantial.

Instead of centralised harmonisation these NTBs will be removed by the adoption of the principle of 'mutual recognition'. Based on a famous case before the European Court of Justice, the *Cassis de Dijon*, the principle states that goods lawfully produced in one country must be accepted to be sold in any other EC country unless a specific exemption is obtained from the Commission. This principle promotes a market-led economic integration based on spontaneous order to replace bureaucratic, government-led harmonisation.

This creates competition between government policies. Those countries who pursue high tax, high regulation, anti-market policies will lose out to low tax, low regulation and market-friendly countries. The single market is a major attack on 'the discretionary powers of government and the monopoly power of labour'.

It is better understood on the Left than the Right that the single market deals a serious blow against both Keynesian and socialist economic policies. In a recent book, Grahl and Teague from the Left present 1992 as a great victory for neo-liberalism and a considerable setback for socialism.

Of course, socialists have sought to counter-attack by trying to capture the EC for their own purposes. First, there is socialist support for protectionism, a 'Fortress Europe' which would be a major error when the EC is responsible for 20% of the world trade and we would open ourselves for retaliation from the rest of the world.

Second, there is the attempt to create a European Social Charter of Workers' Rights, which would create additional business costs and reduce our inter-national competitiveness. Third, there is the proposal to harmonise VAT levels which is totally unnecessary as they would naturally harmonise themselves as a result of tax competition, ie by

market-led means, as occurred in the United States. Tax competition would have the virtue of encouraging states to limit their taxes. Evidence in the USA shows that low tax states have achieved much higher rates of growth than high tax ones.

These socialist moves should be firmly resisted. However, the view frequently presented that it is the UK alone standing against these ideas versus the other eleven is very misleading. First, most EC governments, notably Germany and the Netherlands, are relatively free market and free-trade orientated, although every government has its betrayals of the principles. Second, there is a free market majority in the Commission led by Sir Leon Brittan, the Commissioner for Competition Policy from the UK, Martin Bengemann, the Budget Commissioner from Germany, and Frans Andriessen the Dutch Commissioner for External Relations. Delors is often in the minority within his own Commission. Thirdly there is a small Left-wing majority in the European Parliament, arising primarily from the Conservative Party's poor results in the UK in 1989, but they are rarely united. If the centre-right parties, especially the

Christian Democrats, Conservatives and Liberals can agree, then the European Parliament can truly be a force for liberalism and against socialism.

Many free marketeers have ended up in the position of defending national and parliamentary sovereignty. Yet sovereignty has been frequently used as a weapon to suppress free markets, and implies the absence of external constraints upon the behaviour of governments with majorities in parliament. Liberals should prefer a free market European Community to a sovereign socialist government. The issue is not one of defending sovereignty and, if it is presented as such, liberty will lose. The issue is whether we want a free or socialist Europe. When the debate is expressed in those terms, liberty shall win.

Editor's note: Dr Ashford's talk on 30 September 1992 was based on the text summarised above. The quotation from Hayek is from *The Road to Serfdom* (Routledge, 1973 ed., pp 172-175); the quotation from Buchanan is from his *Europe's Constitutional Future* (Institute of Economic Affairs, pp 3-4).

## THE CAMPAIGN FOR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

### by Ralph Shuffrey

In September 1987 Maurice Frankel, Director of the Campaign for Freedom of Information, was the guest speaker at the Society's lunch in the House of Commons and shortly afterwards the Society decided to become a supporter of the Campaign. Since then I have represented the Society at meetings of the Council for Freedom of Information, which reviews the progress of the Campaign at regular intervals.

The campaign, which has now been in existence for over eight years, has three joint Chairmen: Richard Shepherd MP (Conservative), who addressed the Society at a meeting in the Reform Club in October 1988, Archy Kirkwood MP (Liberal Democrat), and Chris Smith MP (Labour). There are more than sixty supporting organisations.

The main objective of the Campaign is to achieve a statutory right of access to information held by public authorities, with exemptions to cover such areas as national security, law enforcement, individual privacy and genuine commercial confidentiality. Over the past five years the Campaign's small staff have drafted four Bills, which have been taken on by Private Members and have reached the statute book. They are the Access to Personal Files Act, 1987 (dealing with files held on council tenants, social services clients and

school pupils); the Environmental and Safety Information Act, 1988; the Access to Medical Reports Act, 1988 (dealing with reports to insurance companies, employers, etc); and the Access to Health Records Act, 1990. In November 1991 the Campaign published a comprehensive Freedom of Information Bill giving the public the right to see any records held by central government and many other public agencies. The right would be subject to exemptions on the lines indicated above, but these exemptions could be overridden 'in the public interest' if there had been abuse of authority, official negligence, injustice, danger to the public or unauthorised use of public funds. The Bill was introduced into Parliament by Archy Kirkwood, but made no progress because of the general election. It has now been taken up by Mark Fisher (Labour), who came sixth in the ballot for Private Members' Bills this session. The Bill, which has all-party support, is the first Bill for Second Reading on Friday 19 February so it will get a full debate. In addition to the freedom of information provisions it will reform the law on Official Secrets on the lines proposed by Richard Shepherd in a 1988 Bill, require companies to publish in their annual reports information about enforcement proceedings taken against them under various Acts dealing with such matters as consumer protection and public safety, and provide a right of

access by individuals to their own employment records. Anything that members of the Society can do to indicate their support for the Bill (eg by writing to their MPs) will be very welcome.

In my view the Campaign for Freedom of Information is well worth supporting. It has already achieved significant changes in the law and its Freedom of Information Bill would be a fundamental step forward. The Campaign's office is

at 88 Old Street, London EC1V 9AR (tel 071-253-2445). It welcomes help and support from individuals, particularly from volunteer workers either during the daytime or in the evening.

(Mr Ralph Shuffrey, CB, CVO, formerly of the Home Office, is a Vice-President of the Society.)

## HERESIES OF HARMONISATION

by Peter Jackson

People in the health and nutritional fields are currently concerned about the efforts of the drug companies to control the sale and price of vitamins and nutritional supplements.

The drug companies are injecting the concept of danger into innocuous nutritional products and advocating their transfer to the status of drugs - a transfer that would enable them to be marketed much more profitably for the producers and much more expensively for the consumers. In fact the alarm bells rung by the companies have nothing to do with protecting the individual from any real danger but have everything to do with money and power.

Public relations activities are being undertaken to stop individuals having direct access to nutritional materials other than the more expensive patented products placed on the shelf by the drug companies. All this is done in the guise of protecting the individual from the spurious dangers attributed to nutritional products while really dangerous drugs are widely prescribed on National Health.

What is happening in Europe can probably be appreciated best in relation to this paraphrase of a metaphor attributed to Professor Szasz 'From early times drugs have been used for religious experience. They are not now prevalent in western religious practices except for minute quantities of alcohol, and the high priests who hand down "The Word" on drugs today are the gentlemen in white coats. "Blessed" drugs are now those on prescription while "Heretical" drugs are those on the streets.'

It is not the total amount of vitamins sold that concerns the drug companies but the control of vitamins used in sufficient quantities to effect cures - the therapeutic doses. An example of a drug in a "therapeutic dose" is vitamin C when used in much larger amounts than the RDA (recommended daily amount/allowance; this has nothing to do with

toxicity - for example, in respect of vitamin C it could be said to be the amount needed to prevent scurvy). If vitamin C were to be available only on prescription it would be sold at a much higher retail price than is now available. (Pharmaceutical profits on drugs are forty times, or more, than the cost of the raw materials.)

At the moment vitamins retail at approximately three or four times the cost of the basic materials. But when vitamins are included under the same licensing laws as drugs, the drug companies are the only people who can afford to follow the necessary procedures to obtain the licences which become necessary to market the product.

In Switzerland and Germany most vitamin products are already totally under the control of the drug companies and marketed only as proprietary brands. Proprietary brands containing virtually the same products as those sold in other countries are now marketed at twenty or thirty times the basic cost. This is a bill footed by the individual seeking treatments of his or her own choice if indeed he can find a medical practitioner to issue a prescription for vitamins. This distortion of the market has resulted in the dismantling of the alternative medicine industry in those countries and the demise of many small-scale vitamin manufacturers.

For this to happen in Britain would be a complete break with our tradition of free medicine: free in the sense of freedom for the individual to decide on self-medication and for herbalists, naturopaths, osteopaths or any of one of hundred other disciplines, the right to practise, and the right of the individual to choose. This freedom has been restricted only in the case of practitioners, practices or substances believed to be intrinsically dangerous. Vitamins are certainly not intrinsically dangerous but there are specious attempts by vested interests to persuade us to the contrary.

Some of the largest lobbying teams in Brussels are employed and supported by the major drug companies. In some cases these are larger than governmental delegations from other states outside the community. As these lobbyists include ex-governmental and secretariat employees who have been concerned with control and enforcement measures in the United States, Switzerland, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada, have we not crossed the line between public relations and incestuous relations? Of course, everyone has the right to seek employment, or change of employment, or to take a consultancy having gone from, say, the Department of Health in the UK or the Food and Drug Administration in the United States into the employ of the people who seek licences and approvals for various expensively produced drugs and nostrums. However, incest is dangerous when those same drug companies seek to expand those territories which they occupy in the market place to the detriment of the individual citizen.

Let us examine the current activity at the headquarters of the European community in Brussels and the "harmonisation efforts" in terms of control of nutritional supplements such as vitamins and minerals.

Even though every miracle-cure runs out of steam, the extensive public relations activities of the drug industry have built a money-making factory on the basis of these expensive miracle-cures which have been marketed on an international scale. One only has to review the press on the subject of the last forty years to learn that long-promised miracle-cures heralded in the fields of venereal diseases, hay fever, psychiatry, immune diseases, arthritis, rheumatism and heart diseases were then found to have either unacceptable side effects or a lack of efficacy in the long term. However, these same miracle-cures create a welter of iatrogenic problems in their wake. They contrast dramatically with the many wonderful advances in the field of mechanical correction, hygiene and physical technology outside of the field of drugs.

There are a whole range of diseases which have appeared in epidemic proportions after the first flush of success of the introduction of a new antibiotic, which left in its wake mutated versions of the disease it was initially used to treat or new outbreaks of allergies and immune diseases which have resulted from unspecific killing of both friendly and unfriendly bacteria.

There is talk of bringing the UK into conformity with the rest of Europe. Taking the commonly used vitamin C as an example again, in France only pharmacies may sell a dose greater than 200mgs,

presumably in order to avoid any possible dangerous side effects. But there is no known toxic dose of vitamin C; it will cause diarrhoea before it poisons. It is interesting that Linus Pauling recommended seventy-five times that dose, 15 gms vitamin C per day; indeed he regularly took that quantity himself. Most health food shops and supermarkets currently sell 1gm (1000mgs) tablets recommending three per day, which would be fifteen times the legal limit in France. There is general agreement on the continent that arbitrary controls should exist and be harmonised. None of the proposed controls relate to toxicity. The only proposals that the controls should be related to toxicity have been made by the British.

The control of sales of minerals such as zinc in citrate or orotate form (easily assimilated) is to go to the pharmacy if the European Commissioners have their way. Yet according to the *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, 1990, zinc deficiency in diet is a public health problem, (also see Radislaw Scorsky et al 1990 and Harold H Sandstead *Journal of American Dieticians Association* 1991). Zinc deficiency is known to occur in children and adolescents in Egypt, Italy, Turkey, China, USA, the UK and Australia amongst pregnant women. Zinc deficiency has been linked with cystic fibrosis, tinnitus, suppressed immunity, poor healing, dermatitis, and impermanent neuropsychological malfunctions. It does not take a genius to realise that since supplementation is not only a sensible thing to do but preventative just as eating the right diet is preventative.

The major drug companies are looking predatorily at the herbal field of medicine and the nutrition field. They are running out of market place due to a lack of miracle drugs in recent years. They are also running out of creditability at the public level which means people are less willing to pay the high prices. More and more people are choosing to supplement their diet and the drug companies intend to control this development for their profit and the individual's loss. The whole free market movement in this field will be captured at a grasp if the bureaucratic drug companies lobby is successful in Brussels.

Surely the true purposes of an economic community are to permit the free movement of goods and services across national boundaries without let or hindrance and to protect the best interest of the consumer and his right to choice in the market place. The protection and best interest of the consumer should be defined as that which gives him economy together with the optimum choice of quality.



Too many of Brussels' Directives have other objectives. Examples of the way the Directives are biting deep into the British way of life. In *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Oldie* Christopher Booker has reported dozens of stories by readers about how this has already happened.

Proposed EC legislation on nutrition would not only drive many small manufacturers out of business but also limit individual choice and exacerbate costs in the same way that choice of seeds has already been limited and the cost of basic food has been driven up.

A Commons motion against the Europlan to reclassify high dose vitamins and food supplements as medicines has been supported by 44 MPs as a result of lobbying by the Society for the Promotion of Nutritional Therapy. Surely this is a wider matter than just stopping undesirable legislation from Brussels. In this country we do have the right to refuse medical treatment. The natural corollary of this would be the freedom to self-administer any therapy consisting only of nutritional products. This should be a suitable subject to be considered for inclusion in the Citizen's Charter.

(Mr Peter Jackson is a member of the Society's National Council.)

## THE EUROPEAN SUPERSTATE

Teresa Gorman. MP for Billericay since 1987. spoke on the European Superstate at the Society's first supper meeting At Kettner's Restaurant in Soho on 28 October. Attended by more than 40 members the event was a great success and more of such meetings will be held.

Teresa Gorman warned about the dangers of the encroaching European 'superstate', and explained how the Maastricht Treaty posed a very real threat to the freedoms enjoyed by British citizens.

She defined the scope of the Community's powers. The Maastricht treaty would, if implemented, confer a breathtaking mass of new powers upon the Community's institutions in respect of roads, rail,

education, health, culture, tourism, industry, energy, immigration, foreign and security policy, the environment, the economy, employment, consumer protection and town and country planning. Notwithstanding the efforts of John Major in trying to secure a better deal for Britain, the treaty is clearly designed to pave the way for a federal Europe. This is nowhere more vividly illustrated than in the plans for a single economic policy - simply by ratifying the Treaty would commit Britain to these goals. Mrs Gorman then explained the objectives, strategy and tactics of the MPs and peers who were determined to defend British freedom by opposing the ratification of the Treaty.

## AGM and NATIONAL COUNCIL

The Society held the Annual General Meeting for 1991-92 on 25 November. Mrs Mariella Wolf very kindly gave us the use of her lovely home in Baker Street for the occasion.

It was good to see so many of the Society's members gathered together as our Chairman, Sir Richard Body MP, opened the meeting. He spoke of his long involvement with our cause and of the work that still remained to be done in the furtherance of individual freedom. Sir Richard said that he was happy to pass the Chairmanship of the Society to the able hands of Professor Peter Campbell, whom he thanked, together with the other office bearers for their work in the past year.

The Treasurer, Lucy Ryder, delighted those

gathered by outlining the very healthy financial position enjoyed by the Society.

After the elections, recorded below, and a vote of thanks to Sir Richard proposed by Lord Monson, President of the Society, we adjourned for an extremely pleasant buffet by courtesy of our hostess and of our Social Secretary - Mrs Cynthia Campbell Savours - and Miss Campbell Savours.

At the AGM the following were elected:

President: Lord Monson

Vice-Presidents: Lord Blake, Sir Richard Body, MP, Professor D R Myddelton, Cdr W Rees-Millington, Mr R F Shuffrey CB, CVO, and Mrs L Thomson.



Treasurer: Miss L S I Ryder  
Chairman of the National Council: Dr J B Bracewell-Milnes  
National Council: Dr V Bloom, Mrs C Campbell-Savours, Lord Croft, Mrs E Gurney, Mr P Jackson, Mr M MacGregor, Mr G Pearl, Mr J M Plumbe, Mr D Smith and Mrs M Wolf.

At the National Council's meeting held immediately after the AGM the following were elected to the Executive Committee:

Chairman: Professor P W Campbell  
Vice-Chairman: Mr M MacGregor

Secretary: Mr D Smith  
Social Secretary: Mrs C Campbell Savours  
Newsletter Editor: Mr J Hollands  
Lay Member: Mr P Marks  
The post of Publications Editor was not filled.

The National Council then adopted certain amendments to the Rules of the Society, chiefly concerned with identifying the posts of members of the Executive Committee and regulating the procedure for nominating candidates for the offices to which the AGM or National Council elect.

Douglas Smith

## ADVANCED CORPORATION TAX DENOUNCED

Dr J B Bracewell-Milnes, Chairman of the Society's National Council, has produced a vigorous denunciation of the Advanced Corporation Tax as a serious impediment to trade and investment. *AN*

*ACT AGAINST TRADE* is published by the Adam Smith Institute, 23 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3DJ, at £25.

## CORRESPONDENCE

In a letter to the Society Mr Dan E Mayers has raised two important issues on which members' views would be very welcome. Mr Mayers is a member of the Society and also belongs to the National Rifle Association in Britain and in the United States. He writes:

As a life member of your Society I should like to bring to your attention the following:

1 British patients find it virtually impossible to find information from drug companies regarding the detailed properties of the drugs which have been prescribed for them. In America, as a matter of course, full clinical details are enclosed with the package containing the medicine in question and is freely available to each person taking the medicine. In Britain this information is restricted to physicians; it is considered inappropriate for the layman. This constitutes a serious violation of individual liberty; it should be the privilege of any person taking a prescribed - or over the counter - medicine to receive, if he so desires, full information regarding the drug. The British approach suggests that the patient is an idiot incapable of understanding - or not to be trusted with - the information which he may consider vital

to his health and well being.

2 The inability of British citizens to defend themselves adequately in their own homes against armed burglary or personal assault is disgraceful. In America, when a would-be rapist crawls through a bedroom window he stands an excellent chance of having his head blown off. In England all the victim can do is close her eyes and think of England. The right of a householder to take adequate steps for his self-defence is deeply ingrained in British common law. The present regulations purporting to regulate the possession and use of firearms for self-defence are deeply repugnant to the common law principles above mentioned. When the police prove themselves incapable - as they do in so many instances - of protecting the life and property of citizens - these citizens should receive every encouragement to take personal responsibility for their self-defence, instead of being systemically discouraged from doing so. I regard this situation as disgraceful. As Cicero said, 'There exists a law not written down anywhere but inborn in our hearts; a law that comes to us not by training or custom or reading but from nature itself ... that if our lives are endangered, any and every method of protecting ourselves is morally right'.